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A DISCOURSE ON THE
True Meaning of the Bible
as applied to
Morals and Laws.

BY
LADY COOK (formerly Tennessee Claflin).



DELIVERED AT
The Institute of Science, Art and Literature,
LEEDS (ENGLAND), October 10th, 1912.

LADY COOK : AN APPRECIATION.

BY ONE WHO KNOWS HER.

Half-a-century has elapsed since Lady Cook—then a young American girl named Tennessee Claflin—first embarked on the courageous campaign against mock modesty which was destined to cause a tremendous social upheaval not only in the United States but also throughout the English-speaking world. Lady Cook went forth, practically alone and unaided, to “fight the good fight” against Impurity and Social Sham and to preach the Gospel of Truth in regard to the Human Body—“the Temple of God.” She made no pretensions to originality. She did not claim to be a leader. Rather was she contented to write herself down a follower of Christ and to expound His teachings. There was no mincing of words in her brilliant discourse—what her heart thought her tongue spake—and she hit out—“straight,” as the saying is, “from the shoulder.” She wrote as plainly and as forcefully as she spoke. In the newspaper press and on the platforms of the Old World and the New she made her presence felt. The novelty of her teaching, her wonderful address and the magnetism of her personality soon attracted widespread attention. Much of the good seed she sowed fell upon soil that proved to be wonderfully fertile, for in due course it brought forth fruit in abundance. Lady Cook did not spare herself—she never does, indeed: she went from town to town and country to country fearlessly declaiming against ignorance and false modesty and the many absurd conventions which, time out of mind, have prevented women from developing all their faculties as Nature intended they should be developed. With all the fine passion of her nature she denounced the evils of prostitution and the need for self-restraint in sexual relationship; she urged mothers to tell their children the truth about their birth; she never ceased to cry shame upon the “sowing of wild oats” among a certain class of man and the giving of pure young girls in marriage to worn-out *debauchees*; she preached Physical Perfection!

At first, she was bitterly assailed. The daring of her

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LADY COOK began her discourse by quoting the words:—

“Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defileth the temple of God him shall God destroy, for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.” When our Blessed Lord spoke to His disciples and to the multitude He spoke in parables, and He said, “A man went forth to sow his seed. Some fell by the wayside and was lost and came to naught, but some fell on stony ground and immediately the blade came up and withered away because it had no deep-

ness of earth. Some fell among the thorns and thistles and was choked, but some fell on good ground and it came forth thirty, sixty, and an hundred fold.”

And when His disciples said to Him, “Why speakest Thou to the multitude in parables?” He said, “Because they are not yet ready to know the mystery of the Kingdom of Heaven, but unto you it is given to know.” Then He gave them another parable. He said, “The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a man who went out to sow his seed in the field, and while men slept an enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and when the blade sprung up the tares appeared also.” Then His disciples said, “Master, declare unto us the parable of the tares and the wheat.” He said, “The good seed are the children of God, and of the Kingdom of Heaven, but the tares are the children of the wicked one, of the Devil, and the field is the world.”

What I want to tell, and prove to you, is that this blessed Bible from Genesis to Revelation refers to the redemption of the body, and that Christ was crucified for telling you that your body is the

temple of God. One of His most beautiful teachings was, "Suffer little children to come unto Me and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven." He made no distinction between white or black, rich or poor, legitimate or illegitimate. He simply said, "Suffer little children to come unto Me, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven." He also said, "Know ye not that the Kingdom of Heaven is within you?"

What He meant to convey was that children should be a blessing instead of a curse. We should understand the affinity of motherhood and fatherhood. Christ was born of a woman—the same as every woman in this house to-night. He made no mystery regarding His coming into the world, or the immaculate conception. He said, "I am from the root and the offspring of David and the bright and shining star." The symbol of religion, then, is not crucifying our blessed Saviour, but that Divine Child being born into the world of a pure girl. When the Star of Bethlehem appeared to proclaim to the world the birth of a Divine Soul, men came from afar to do homage to that pure girl who had brought into the world this Divine Life.

That is the beginning of religion, and there is no more beautiful picture in the world than the naked Christ clinging to His mother's breast. For children, no matter how poor, whether in the lowly manger, cottage, or palace, the Lord God has His blessings for them all. I want to say to-night that which I do not think anyone else would tell you, how to respect your own bodies—the temples of God. "He that committeth fornication doth sin against his own body, therefore flee from fornication."

In the next verse He said, "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost that is within you? Therefore, glorify God in your body." Then if our body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, and the Kingdom of Heaven is within us, and we are the temple of the living God, where does the Trinity come in? The Trinity is no longer the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The true Trinity, then, is the father and mother, both equal and both responsible to complete the Trinity, the child. To them that are pure in heart "all things are pure," and they that are pure shall see God, and talk to God face to face, for if God is within us why then we do talk with God, and we are God's. What an awful thing it is to refer to your "nasty body," when He who gave His life came to teach you that your body was the temple of the living God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. He said shortly before His crucifixion, "Beware of those that come after Me, for they will teach damnation and destruction, for they are hypocrites and deceivers. They will be like ravenous wolves seeking whom they may devour." Beware, and by all means "Watch and pray." By all means *watch*. What has been taught us by those who have come after Him? Some preach Lo! Christ here and others Lo! Christ there.

Only a few months ago Lombroso, that great criminologist, made the amazing statement that all women were born liars. I have not yet heard of a challenge or a duel over such a terrible assertion! Only the other day a judge in London made another remarkable statement about women. "Put a woman in the witness-box and she will swear to anything up to the hilt." That is the name we mothers, wives, and sisters have got; it has been our environment and our teaching that have made it possible that we should be called liars. The most sacred thing on earth, woman, does tell falsehoods. We have been taught that we are all born and conceived in sin and made in iniquity, that to bring forth a child is a deadly sin, and that we mothers are the instruments of the devil, and it has been preached and doubted whether women were human beings. At the Council of Macon the Bishops even argued whether we women had souls!

Under such teaching, do you wonder that a woman tells falsehoods, and dares not tell her children the beginning of life, and the truth about their coming into the world, and what she has suffered for them? No! When a little child runs up to its mother and asks, "Mother, who made me?" she replies, "The doctor brought you," "I found you in a gooseberry-bush," or "A stork dropped you." A child of that conscious age knows already perhaps more than his mother thinks he does. He has a sincere desire to know, but instead of hearing the truth from his mother, he hears it in the streets, from his little companions, in a very different way than it should be imparted to him by his intelligent mother. But look at the other side. When the child asks, "Mother, who made me?" "Who made you, darling? Why your parents are responsible for your life. Your mother carried you under her heart for many weeks and months, and at last went into the very garden of Gethsemane to bring you into the world. Now you see, my darling, why mother loves you so, and why she would give her life to save yours. For many weary nights and days I have watched over you to bring you to your present age. And that is the reason I am called 'Mother,' for mother means 'Labour,' and you have cost me much." (Applause.)

Do you think a boy, who is imbued with that pure teaching, could ever insult or debauch any other mother's daughter? No. His respect for his mother would prevent him bringing a blush of shame to her face. We would be quite secure in that young man's society. No danger of *him* going abroad and sowing wild oats, and defiling our young girls! I read in the papers to-day about the White Slave Traffic and the Bishop of London. They came and asked me, "Lady Cook, what can we do? We know every year there are thousands of girls in every city, drafted away, and hundreds of thousands and millions throughout the world every few years are sacrificed to the passion of prostitution. What can we do?" "Stop it," I said.

"That is what we want to do, but we want to make a law to punish it." I said, "You cannot make men pure and good by law. You must do it by teaching. If there was not a demand there would not be a supply." We have got to stop the demand; we mothers have got to take the bull by the horns and teach our boys that they can be just as pure and good as their sisters. If a man would throttle another man who insulted his sisters, then let him in turn expect some other man to throttle him. (Cheers.) Had not you better keep these young people apart? What a misunderstanding! Is it usual for one mother to have all girls and another all boys? It is natural for boys and girls to be brought up together, and taught by their blessed mother. I feel sorry for a boy who has not got a sister to protect. I love these young men. They want the society of girls. It is born in them to take care of us women, just as it is natural for us women to want a baby. We cry for babies before we are two years old. Sometimes you cannot quieten a baby until it gets a doll. It is born in us to become mothers; not to fill our institutions with the ignorant, and our streets and asylums with prostitutes, degenerates, and the feeble-minded. We do want to bring into the world pure and healthy children. We are hero worshippers. Christ said to the woman, "Blessed be the fruit of thy womb." Oh! women, it is a blessing to bring into the world healthy and strong children, under the guidance of intelligence, not in ignorance, and not what was said of the bondwoman's child that it was "born in the flesh."

Christ said that the bond woman should be turned out, and that neither she nor her children should inherit. But He said to His disciples, "But we are the children of the free woman, and the children of love, the children of promise." Within the last few weeks I counted sixty-six children who had been murdered by their mothers. Is it natural? The poor souls have had no rest, a child born every year. Some of them have said that for days they had not had anything to eat, and their husbands had deserted them, and they were worn out and desperate. They had taken the lives of their children that they had suffered the agony of death to bring into the world. Let us always remember that Christ's last message on the way to Calvary was: "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and your children. . . . The days are coming in the which they shall say: "Blessed are the barren and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck."

What we want to teach our boys is what Christ said: "To him that overcometh even as I overcame will I give to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God." Our boys should be taught that there is responsibility and honour in fatherhood; and our little girls should be taught the sacredness of motherhood. It is not to bring children into the world, under drunkenness, and depraved conditions. It is not the poor. God bless them. They love

their children. Some of our greatest geniuses, some of our greatest men, have come from the poor. We want children neither born nor bred in ignorance. It is foolish to send your missionaries abroad. You had better turn them into the slums of every city and town where the people breed like flies, and herd like beasts, and often in a state of starvation. (Applause.)

It is written, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth." Remember "in the days of thy youth"—"not wait for the evil days, not wait for the time to come when you have no pleasure in them." That is in the Bible—Ecclesiastes. It means, Remember now thy creative powers in the days of thy youth, and honour thy father and mother—(hear, hear)—that your days may be long in the land. There is too much truth enshrined and involved in the Bible for us to cast it aside.

What I want to teach you to-night and to impress upon you is this—not to take a text and give a long sermon. When the children return from church, you ask, "What did you hear?" and they answer, "I do not know, but I remember the text." What I want of you is to read and think for yourselves, and teach your children, and go through that Bible, and understand it from beginning to end, and you will then bring in the Millennium. What I want to prove to you is, that from Genesis to Revelation, the Bible refers to the body. I want you all to get an understanding about Christ, His Mother, and the Trinity. It is said that Adam never had a mother. God made him out of a clod of earth and fashioned and breathed into him and made him into a man. You will agree with me that Adam had a mother. I admit he *was* made from a clod. But where did that clod come from? It came from *mother earth*! The earth represents woman. The seed is planted and remains until it is ready to burst and come forth. We always say "Mother Earth." (Applause.)

The other day I read in the papers that someone wanted a quarter of a million to go and look for the Garden of Eden. They thought they would get some wealth. They are all after money. The idea of it! They want to find the Garden of Eden, just as if God had a little farm and made male and female that He might put them out. We all know what Eden means—happiness, pleasure, and delight. The word "garden" means fruitful. Not only that, but it says in the midst of the Garden of Eden He planted a tree of life, and to keep the way to the tree of life He put two cherubim, and a flaming sword. I need hardly explain that the cherubim are the two eyes. We all know the flaming sword is a woman's tongue—(laughter)—and a two-edged sword. And then it is said "out of her mouth cometh the words of wisdom and her tongue is the law of kindness."

In the Garden "He made male and female." He looked at them and pronounced them good and was satisfied. Pope said the greatest work of God was man, and I say woman, too.

All of us women are only ribs. Just think of it. A great many object to being called a rib, but I see a great deal in it. The Lord God did not take us from man's feet to be trampled on, or from his hands to be made slaves of, or from his head to rule over us. He took us from his side so that we could walk shoulder to shoulder with him through life, and each be responsible for our acts and our children. (Applause.) And God favoured woman. He took the very best rib, the one right over the heart. I have always believed the heart adhered to that rib, and that is the reason why women are all heart and sympathy, and men are so heart-less. (Laughter.)

The Lord God said to Adam, "It is not good for you man to live alone, I must make you a helpmeet." He did not say I want to make you a wife or a servant, or merely a beast of burden or something to breed with. He said I must make you a helpmeet, so you can help each other. So He put him into a deep sleep and took from his side a rib. And when Adam awoke he found his little helpmeet ready to go through life with him.

Do you not think that God was very good to him? Adam did not have to go through anything like the mothers have to-day in order to give you your wives—such little sicknesses as teething, whooping cough, and measles, and other things that keep us awake all the night. He gave to him a full-grown woman. So he treated male and female alike. But when the good God left the Garden He said to the man and woman, "I am leaving now everything in this Garden of Eden for you to control. There is one thing I must tell you. You must not touch the tree that is in the midst of the Garden because when you do, and eat of the Tree of Life, you become like Gods—like one of us—and become creators. Therefore, you must not touch the Tree of Life until you understand the Tree of Knowledge." He did not say the Tree of Ignorance, but the Tree of Knowledge, which is power. When God came back after His walk in the cool of the eve, He called out, "Adam, come forth: where art thou?" Adam answered, "I cannot come because I am naked." "Who told thee that thou art naked? Come forth."

And Adam did, dragging Eve right with him to take all the blame and before she had time to finish the fig-leaf apron! Then he said, "The woman Thou gavest me tempted me and I did eat." When God turned to the blushing Eve, what did she say? Boldly and truthfully, "The Serpent"—(which is lust—you all know that)—"tempted me, and I put forth my hand and took the apple and I did eat, but I gave Adam almost the whole of it, and he ate the

core as well.” (Laughter.) Just think of the difference. She told the truth—tempted with lust before God returned to teach them that the Tree of Life was a sacred thing and should be understood and be protected. We are told that was the first sin. It was not sin, it was ignorance. I take the Tree of Life to mean that we have no right to come forth and propagate and fill the world without understanding the Tree of Knowledge. (Applause.)

The Garden of Eden means that. And that is the commencement of the Bible. All through, it tells you about great men and law-givers. Moses was the great law-giver. He had two mothers—one to put him in the bulrushes and the other to pull him out. (Laughter.) All through, the Bible refers to the greatness of woman and her use to the world—and man. Why I am ready to declare war now against Vice, Ignorance, and Prudery, and to conquer with Love, Purity, Understanding, and Intelligence. I am ready now to proclaim war, to take down stone by stone and not leave one stone upon another until we annihilate the Chinese wall of mock modesty. We dare not talk about the beginning of life.

Let me tell you about modesty. It is to be noted among the first signs of the decline of Rome that the women so famous for virtue had become demoralised. Purity has nothing to conceal. Modesty like love thinketh no evil. (Applause.)

I once observed some young women arriving unexpectedly in a gallery upon a group of nude statues. They gave one good look, then screamed, and fled as if pursued by satyrs. You see, the immodesty that alarmed them was not in the statues, but in their own impure minds. It was the observation of the great Flaxman that the students on entering the academy where they studied from the nude figures “seemed to hang up their passions with their hats. Their familiarity with natural beauty allowed them only to inform their minds and to purify their tastes.” (Applause.)

I have come here to Leeds to try to open all your churches and chapels so that young people may go in there at any time, and your daughters may meet young men and let them propose marriage. I am a matchmaker, and I would like to see a great number of our young men and young women that are fit to be mothers and fit to be fathers marry in their youth, and let each be a helpmeet to the other. Too often a young married woman forgets that she was intended to be a helpmeet. Women should not hang round a man’s neck like a stone. It is for both to know what it is to bring forth life and protect each other. It is mutual.

In Revelation we have the passage, “And I, John, saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem.” You must remember that Jerusalem means “women,” and when he said, “Oh, Jerusalem,” he meant “Oh, women.” “Oh, women, how long have I tried to gather

you like a hen gathers her chickens and ye would not." "And I, John, saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of Heaven prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And there was a Tree of Life that bore twelve manner of fruit, and yielded her fruit every month." John saw the Tree of Life in the last chapters of Revelation, and he said, "I saw the Tree of Life planted by a pure river of water and the leaves (that is the children) were for the healing of the nation." "I saw a new Heaven and a new earth for the first Heaven and the first earth had passed away and there was no more sea." He promises you a Utopia, and that the Millennium shall come. I wish it would come before I pass over! I would, as I say, like to declare war right away in Leeds, and build the Church of Purity, Truth, and Understanding, and then the gates of hell shall not prevail against us. But whether I could get you people to come forward and sacrifice yourselves, that is another thing. Perhaps, however, the time is not quite ripe yet; but we women have a duty to perform.

We do not intend to bring any more idiots, degenerates, and feeble-minded into the world to fill the streets and asylums; on the other hand, we intend to empty them, by stopping the supply. I read a few weeks ago that the Government had given a large amount of money to build an institution for the feeble-minded. I was asked, "Are you not interested in these unfortunate children?" I said, "No; I do not believe in making them, in the first place." I want women to understand themselves, to know what it is to bring forth the image of God. Every woman should know, and every doctor does, that a woman can mould her child in her womb to make it a thief, drunkard, or a monstrosity, or to mark it in some way at some critical moment. You can then understand how sacred a thing it is to bring into the world a being that should be a blessing. The Bible says, "Those members of Christ that are now reviled and rejected by the builder shall become the revered stone of the temple of the living God." (Applause.)

People have said, "Lady Cook, why will you not be a leader?" I have said, "I cannot, I am a follower of Christ. I am not capable of bringing into the world a teaching of such divine utterance as that in the Bible." You do not know how happy you have made me. In listening so attentively, you have given me all the happiness I want. I have got to pass over very soon, and I have given all my time, my youth, and money, and now I am ready to give my life to go on with this work to bless humanity and the future generations. (Applause.)

You know Sir John Lubbock, afterwards made Lord Avebury, whose beautiful book, entitled "The Pleasures of Home," you will have read. Let me read this paragraph:—"No one who has ever loved mother, wife, sister, or daughter, can read without astonishment and pity, St. Chrysostom's description of woman: 'They are

a necessary evil, a natural temptation, a diabolical calamity, a domestic peril, a deadly fascination, a painted ill." No wonder Sir John Lubbock said it was with pity and sorrow that anyone could read such a thing of a woman! But that is not all. I will give you a little idea why we women are almost idiots, and why we have been kept down. We have not dared to tell the masters when we take our children to school and college that they should teach our children that their bodies are the temples of God, and to see that they did not resort to secret practices, etc., and say, "I want my boy to come out as good as he came in here." If you make confidants of your children they will believe you, and you will make a little heaven on earth, whether in the palace, garret, or the cellar. (Applause.)

"God is love," and love is God, and He says He will make a Heaven on earth; what is more of Heaven where God is than a young couple with their children round them and the husband looking up to his wife and respecting her as his colleague and helpmeet, not as his servant, not to be made use of, but as a companion and co-worker? What is that but Heaven? Christ says, "In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so I would have told you." I am going to read to you now why women have been kept down and have been treated worse than slaves and did not dare to speak out and to say, "I shall not bring into the world any more than I can take care of, and I shall understand myself and my darling husband."

Here is "A Guide for Priests in their Public and Private Life," by Father F. B. Valery, S.J. It is the fifth edition, and was published in Dublin in 1898 as "thoroughly revised." I do not like to quote this, but I must tell you why women have been treated like slaves and worse than beasts during the last few centuries. On page 68, under the heading of "Dangerous Connections," one reads: "What is woman?" St. Jerome gives the answer, "She is the gate by which the devil enters, the road that leads to sin; she is what the sting of the scorpion is." And in another place he says: "Woman is a fire, man the tow, and the devil the bellows." St. Maximus writes of a woman, "She makes shipwreck of men, she is a tyrant who leads them captive, a lioness who holds them fast in her embraces, a siren decked out to lead them to destruction, a malicious, evil beast." And St. Anastasius, the Sinaiite, says: "She is a viper clothed with a shining skin, a comfort to the demon, a laboratory of devils, a flaming furnace, a javelin where-with the heart is pierced, a storm by which houses are overthrown, a guide leading to darkness, a teacher of all evil, an unbridled tongue, speaking evil of the saints." And St. Bonaventure writes: "A fair woman tricked out with her finery is a keen and sharp-edged sword in the hands of the devil."

Now a word about our blessed Saviour. There is not a soul in

this house but what loves that blessed Christ—the best friend woman ever had. Who was it that He appeared to after the Resurrection? Mary Magdalene. He knew she needed his sympathy and love. No wonder women washed His feet with their tears and wiped them with the hair of their heads.

What is religion—what does it mean? Religion means re, back—ligio, bind—back bind—it means restrain, repress yourselves, from fornication and all evil thoughts. Let us remember that the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children unto the third and fourth generation, for as you sow so shall you reap. "He that defileth the temple of God him shall God destroy, for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." That is what Christ taught. Do not blame us if we have done things that perhaps you do not approve of. In the ages, thousands of years back in India, they taught that a boy or man who forgets the sufferings of the mother who gave him birth should be reborn in the body of an owl for three transmigrations, "for it was at the prayer of a woman that the Creator pardoned man. Cursed be he who forgets it." Yes, you do love and respect woman, and you want to live pure lives. I am astonished to find so many young men, and even men who have attained manhood, true, noble and pure. (Applause.) They are thinking that sowing domestic oats is better than sowing wild oats and reaping at the same time.

If your daughter has a nice little home, no matter how poor, she is better off than the woman in the streets, who has been brought down to degradation, while the man who was her partner in sin is received into society, and we women throw our pure daughters into his arms and never say a word. Mothers would not dare to ask a man, "Are you as pure as my daughter whom you expect to marry?"

I was speaking to a lady, whose daughter, only seventeen, was to be married to an officer going to India. I said, "Have you made inquiries respecting the life he has led?" The Society lady replied: "Lady Cook, if we asked a man that question we should never get our daughters married off." I said, "Then they had better never marry." (Applause.) I do not believe in prostitution. We are taught that prostitution is a necessary evil, and doctors advise it; but it is an unnecessary curse! (Applause.)

Who are the victims? Why, our daughters, of whom a million out of those who are brought into the world die every four years a prey to the effects of prostitution. They are brought forth to cater to our boys, our husbands, and our fathers, to cater to their lust and to enable them to sow their wild oats. The horror of it! You may die and your daughters may become the "necessary evil." When you come to think and to under-

stand it, you will recognise that if women were roused to their might, we could stop the white slave traffic and the market for prostitution and stop it at once. (Applause.)

I never knew a man but what he was like a boy who needed the advice of his mother, no matter how old. There are a great number of men in Parliament to-day whose mothers, wives, or daughters wrote their speeches and advised them. (Laughter and applause.) And some men are not ashamed to own it either. What did the great Bismarck say, "What I am I have become through my wife. I respect every woman who elevates us men. I have long wished for the co-operation of women in politics." And the equally great Lord Salisbury said: "I earnestly hope that the day is not far distant when women will also bear their share in voting for members of Parliament and determining the policy of the country. I can conceive of no argument by which they can be excluded. It is obvious that they are abundantly as well-fitted as many who now possess the franchise." Thousands and thousands of men who are novelists and politicians and successful business men owe their position to women.

Just see how we women are looking after you men. There is not a woman who has got a son that is really worthy, but what would give her life to put him there instead of going to Parliament herself, and put her husband there, too. It is not the vote exactly; it is what it entails. (Applause.) The anti-Suffragists say, "We do not want the vote and we will stop it." But nobody is going to take them by a halter to the poll and tell them to vote. My husband said he never voted but once, and then he voted for the wrong man. (Laughter.) We want our boys and husbands to respect their mothers and us women who are the builders of the Empire. You take our best to war without a word. You leave your degenerates and your paupers and drunkards, your underfed and feeble-minded, who are not fit to be parents—you leave them to breed and multiply! That is why I want Arbitration. (Applause.)

I tell you now, that if we women had ever been in power when the Boer War was going on I think we would have done a little bit better than a lot of the old women that went out there. (Applause and laughter). But we are going to show our wisdom. It is we women who suffer when our child is killed on the battlefield or gallows or becomes a degenerate or goes into an asylum or is taken to the electric chair or sent to prison. Oh! it is the mother that I am feeling for to-night. That blessed word—Mother! There are few words in the world so sacred as Mother and Home. When you realise it, you boys, you will respect your mothers better, you will respect yourselves, and you will look upon your wives as helpmeets instead of merely as persons to take care of you and do your bidding. You will be companions, you will be colleagues, and go through life shoulder to shoulder. (Applause.)

I want the churches and all the ministers to come out and teach you the truth about the temple of God, and do their duty that they are paid for. They have their churches; let them teach the true teaching. (Applause.) Let the children have little games and amusements instead of walking the streets and getting into dark corners. Open your churches and discuss things. Let them have discussions on every subject. You might even talk about another invasion of England, another Mutiny in India, or the political unrest in Egypt, or perhaps a discussion on the rotten financial position of England. I think you boys and girls might make yourselves very useful, and understand what conditions you have got to live under. (Applause.)

I want to do away with mock modesty. I want women, and men also, to join in this purity crusade, and bring about a better condition of things. What did Beadicea do when Britain was invaded? She went forth and called to her subjects and said: "Men and women, follow me to battle"; and she attached scythes to her chariot and drove through the enemy, and mowed them down like grass. And then you tell us that women have not got any courage or bravery. What about the Spartan women? It was their wont to buckle their shields on the arms of their husbands and sons and say, "Return either with your shield or upon it." When a foreign lady remarked to Gorgo, the wife of Leonidas, "The Spartan women alone rule men," Gorgo answered, "But we Spartan women alone bring forth men." The Spartans were heroes because their mothers were heroines before them. (Applause.) To say that we are not brave because we jump on a chair at the sight of a mouse, that is nothing. Why, the greatest animal, the elephant, will tremble with abject fear at the very sight of a mouse. What about the Amazons? When the women of Zurich saw their danger, they got all the animals together, gathered all the implements of war, donned their husbands' clothes, and then sallied out to meet the enemy; and they, seeing this great army as they thought, fled, and Zurich was saved. Women, surely, have the courage even to bring new women into the world. (Applause and laughter.)

I am proud that you have listened to me, that you have come here from so far to give me your ear, and I hope I have given you something to think about. Now that it is getting late I must say "Good-night," but I must tell you that this

"Good-night is such sweet sorrow
That I could say good-night until to-morrow."

Now let me give you my blessing as I am going away; perhaps you will never see or hear me again. Let me give you my benediction before I leave you. God bless women. God bless fathers, but God bless mothers, that their children may grow up and call them blessed. Sow purity and you shall reap purity. (Loud applause.)

teaching, her pronounced opinions and her swift outspokenness were all in advance of her time. She was ostracised socially—dropped, by certain worthy folk, like the proverbial hot potato! She was persecuted by many, and by some threatened with personal violence. She was even prosecuted for obscenity! But she cared nothing for all this: the more fiercely she was attacked the more vigorously she pursued the work on which she had embarked and from which, as she early realised, there was no turning back. Fortunately for her, the pioneer of the “new movement,” as it was called married a man—the late Sir Francis Cook, Bart.—who believed heart and soul in his wife’s ideals and the goodness and purity of her motives: and it was Lady Cook’s appreciation of this fact that inured her to the calumnious persecution she received and encouraged her to even greater efforts in her strenuous crusade. Hers was no money-making campaign: she neither sought nor received a single farthing from anyone in that connection. On the contrary, she has from the first freely given her whole time and money to the work, and frequently impoverished herself in the process. Nor can anyone truthfully assert that she has ever been actuated by a desire for notoriety—a thing she abhors!

Why, then, it may be asked, has Lady Cook sacrificed the best years of her life and a considerable fortune to the often thankless task of attempting to reform Society? Solely, it may be answered, *because she had to*—and simply because she could not help herself! It was born in her, this desire for the betterment of her race. She imbibed it from the good mother under whose sheltering heart, as she herself would say, she was carried for so many weary months—that mother who continually prayed that her unborn child might be a blessing to the world at large. And so it has proved. To-day, old and worn, and in far from robust health, Lady Cook can look placidly down the long vista of years and reflect with thankfulness and pride on the good work she has done in breaking down so many of the shams and conventions of Society: in preaching the doctrine of purity: and in opening people’s eyes to the necessity of preserving the virility of the race. “Something attempted—something *DONE!*”

IN THE PRESS

A Biographical Sketch

OF

Lady Cook

(Formerly Tennessee Claflin)

Essays & Other Works



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